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ABSTRACT

As the seventh in a series of reports resulting from an ongoing review and evaluation of the Department of Labor's implementation of the Emergency Employment Act (EEA) of 1971, the report cites jobs in public service areas provided by EEA funds: law enforcement, education, public works and transportation, health and hospitals, environmental quality, fire protection, parks and recreation, social service, and other areas. About 200,000 public service jobs were established by State and local governments under the Act. In rural areas, the program generally served to provide additional needed public services. In urban areas, the program generally helped to prevent a decrease in city services rather than providing additional services. In discussing the program in the context of new public services, improvement of existing services, or making possible the continuation of existing programs, the report cites particular examples from each based on agent official's subjective estimates. One appendix lists the preceding six reports while a second appendix is a statement of funds awarded and jobs authorized in 1970 under EEA. (AG)

ED 084417

REPORT TO THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT, MANPOWER, AND POVERTY, COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND PUBLIC WELFARE UNITED STATES SENATE

Public Service Benefits From Jobs Under The Emergency Employment Act Of 1971

B-163922

Department of Labor

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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

B-163922

The Honorable Gaylord Nelson
Chairman, Subcommittee on Employment,
Manpower, and Poverty
Committee on Labor and Public Welfare
United States Senate

Dear Mr. Chairman:

This is the seventh of a series of reports in response to your letter of July 28, 1971, requesting us to conduct an ongoing review and evaluation of the Department of Labor's programs to implement the Emergency Employment Act of 1971 (85 Stat. 146). This report provides information on public service benefits from jobs under the act.

Nationwide, about 200,000 public service jobs were established by State and local governments under the act. Although we found it somewhat difficult to determine the extent of changes in public services resulting from the program, on the basis of our discussions with program agents, it appears that the public service benefit objective of the act was being met.

To understand how the jobs created under the act assisted communities in meeting public service needs, we reviewed a cross-section of jobs established by nine selected program agents who administered section 5 and section 6 programs involving $65.6 million in Federal grants during the first program year.

At the locations reviewed, the program agents used Federal grants to establish jobs which (1) provided public services which had not existed before, (2) improved or augmented existing services, or (3) continued services which otherwise would have been either eliminated or substantially cut back as a result of budget cuts at the local and state level.

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This report was discussed with program officials of the Department and representatives of certain program agents, and their views were considered in its preparation. However, at the request of your office, we did not submit this report to the Department of Labor or to the program agents for formal review or comments.

Copies of this report are being sent to the Director, Office of Management and Budget, and the Secretary of Labor.

We believe that this report would interest other committees and Members of Congress, agency officials, and others. Therefore, as you have agreed, we are distributing copies of this report.

Sincerely yours,

Elmer B. Staats

Comptroller General
of the United States

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ABBREVIATIONS

EEA	Emergency Employment Act of 1971
GAO	General Accounting Office
OEO	Office of Economic Opportunity

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Emergency Employment Act of 1971 (EEA) is to provide unemployed and underemployed persons with transitional employment in jobs providing needed public services during periods of high unemployment. The Congress authorized appropriations of $1 billion for fiscal year 1972 and $1.25 billion for fiscal year 1973 to carry out the act.

The full authorization of $1 billion was appropriated for fiscal year 1972. The $1.25 billion authorized for fiscal year 1973 was included in the appropriation bills passed by the Congress; however, the bills were vetoed by the President and the Department operated the programs under a continuing resolution at a $1 billion level and allocated $447.1 million on a month-to-month basis for operations before March 15, 1973. On March 8, 1973, the President signed Public Law 93-9, a joint resolution continuing the Department's funding through June 30, 1973, and providing $1.25 billion for EEA programs. The Department, on April 11, 1973, allocated the remaining $802.9 million to continue program operations from March 15, 1973, through June 30, 1974, when the agents are required to complete their programs.

The Department granted about $973 million during the first year of the program to 657 States, counties, cities, and Indian tribes serving as program agents. Department reports showed that these agents had established about 200,000 public service job opportunities under the act.

Section 7 of the act required each program agent to submit a description of unmet public service needs and a statement of priorities among these needs for the area covered by the grant application. The act and program guidelines defined "public services" as services normally provided by government agencies in the fields of environmental quality, health care, housing and neighborhood improvements, recreation, education, public safety, maintenance of streets, parks, and other public facilities, rural development, transportation, beautification, conservation, crime prevention and control, prison rehabilitation, and other fields of human betterment.

The Department's guidelines established nine public service area categories that describe the functions of each service. For example, the public service category "Law Enforcement" included not only police departments but also the court systems, correctional institutions, and related functions.

Also, EEA participants were to be categorized by their public service area and not by occupation. For example, a security officer working at a hospital may be included in the "health and hospital" area whereas a nurse working at a school may be included in the "education" area.

EEA funds enabled program agents to provide jobs in a diversity of public service areas as shown in the nationwide breakdown of jobs presented below.

Public service area	Percent of EEA jobs
Law enforcement	11
Education	20
Public works and transportation	22
Health and hospitals	9
Environmental quality	4
Fire protection	3
Parks and recreation	9
Social services	6
Other	16
Total	100

Overall, the nine program agents we reviewed provided jobs in about the same percentages as the agents nationwide, except that slightly greater emphasis was placed on law enforcement and social service jobs and somewhat less emphasis was placed on educational and public works and transportation jobs. However, because of the wide range of services which could be met through EEA jobs and the differing needs in various localities, jobs varied for each agent.

In congressional hearings many State and local government officials, public interest groups, business and labor organizations and private citizens testified on the need for adopting a measure such as EEA. These officials spoke of

the budgetary problems being experienced by units of local government, the unemployment problems being encountered in their jurisdictions, and the needed public services remaining unmet.

The report of the Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare on EEA (S. Rept. 92-48, 92d Cong., 1st sess.), stated:

> "The bill will deal with a national emergency which has two parts:
>
> 1. The rapid increase in unemployment in the past 15 months which has created substantial hardship for hundreds of thousands of individuals and their families; and
>
> 2. The inadequacy of many vital public services, some of which are being drastically curtailed because of lack of local and State revenues, severely aggravating problems in our most troubled cities and rural areas."

Also, the report on EEA by the House Committee on Education (H. Rept. 92-176, 92d Cong. 1st sess.), commented:

> "Along with the principal benefit of this legislation-providing jobs-runs another of almost equal importance. All of the persons employed under this Act will be engaged in the provision of public services to people. It will be possible for State and local officials, who cannot now afford to do so, to hire people to work on community beautification and betterment projects, to make additions to the work force in the vital area of public safety, to improve and expand recreation programs, public education, and to do many other things that will benefit their communities."
>
> "We want to emphasize that we do not contemplate "leafraking" jobs. We have studied reports by independent researchers and the National Civil Service League which clearly indicate that there are literally hundreds of

thousands of valuable public jobs which need undertaking but for which State and local governments simply lack the funds. It will not be necessary for a mayor to invent jobs for people; his real needs will far exceed his entitlement under this Act."

CHAPTER 2

EVALUATION OF PUBLIC SERVICE BENEFITS

One of the purposes of EEA was to fill unmet needs for public services through a program of public employment during periods of high unemployment. To meet these needs, the Congress contemplated that EEA would provide jobs, throughout State and local service areas, with a wide range of skills and pay scales.

Nationwide, about 200,000 public service jobs were established by State and local governments under the act. Although we found it somewhat difficult to determine the extent of changes in public services resulting from the program, according to statements made to us by program agents, it appears that the public service benefit objective of EEA was being met.

We obtained our information for the most part through discussions with agency officials. The majority of the program agents contacted said using EEA participants helped to meet public service needs and they were pleased with the participants' on-the-job performance. Although many agencies used EEA participants to establish new services, officials of the employing agencies said the primary benefit from employing EEA participants was the improvement of existing public services. In several locations EEA funds were used to provide jobs to restore or continue services eliminated or cut back because of budgetary problems.

In a related review involving six other program agents operating public employment programs in rural and urban areas, we found that in the urban areas the program generally served to prevent a decrease in city services rather than to provide additional services and that in the rural areas the program generally served to provide additional needed public services.

It was not feasible for us to evaluate fully the effect which the 11,000 jobs created by the 9 selected program agents had on meeting their public service needs, because employing agencies generally did not maintain work productivity records for their various service activities. It should be noted, however, that neither the act nor the Department's

program guidelines required the agents to develop a system for measuring output or to report information of this type for EEA jobs.

Although detailed information quantifying increased or new services would be helpful in evaluating the program's impact, we do not believe it would be practicable for the Department to require program agents to establish elaborate systems to provide such measurements, particularly since in most instances the EEA jobs represented only a small increment to existing organizations.

At each program agent, we reviewed a sampling of the jobs created to ascertain how program agents used previously unemployed and underemployed persons to fill public service needs. Examples are categorized as follows:

1. Creation of new public services that have not existed before.

2. An improvement or augmentation of existing services.

3. Provision of services previously provided but either eliminated or substantially cut back as a result of budget cuts at the local and State level.

NEW PUBLIC SERVICES THROUGH EEA

The Modesto City, California, school district hired 32 persons in instructional-type jobs with EEA funds. Two of the teachers hired under EEA developed a new reading program in two elementary schools. Another teacher served as a student ombudsman and was active in dealing with the students' drug problems.

The school district also started a new preschool program for 300 children with 16 teacher aides directly assisting classroom teachers. Officials said EEA personnel were almost as efficient as regular personnel and the district could use more of them.

The Stanislaus County, California, Public Works Department employed 16 EEA maintenance men to initiate its first litter cleanup program, serving 1,700 miles of county roads. For example, during February 1972, the EEA enrollees picked

up 27 tons of garbage along 133 miles of road. Three other EEA maintenance men were used to open county dumps on Sundays A public works official estimated 300 to 400 customers now use the dump each Sunday.

The city of San Jose's Parks and Recreation Department created openings for 12 EEA neighborhood center supervisors. Seven of these 12 were working in new service areas--organizing and supervising crafts, recreation, and other activities--in previously unserved geographical areas.

The Stanislaus County auditor-controller told us that, before the EEA program, his department was understaffed in professional accountants by 50 percent. The services of seven EEA accountants enabled the accounting department to develop new services and to expand the level of existing services. Two of these accountants established the county's first internal audit staff.

Another enrollee developed a cost allocation system which permitted the county to collect an additional $350,000 to $400,000 a year in increased medicare, welfare, and grant payments. Two other enrollees were given full accounting responsibilities for the EEA program.

AUGMENTED OR IMPROVED SERVICES RESULTING FROM EEA

The Stanislaus County Probation Department employed nine EEA deputy probation officers. The head of the department estimated the caseload per officer was reduced 15 percent because of EEA enrollees. This allowed probation officers to spend more time providing counseling and employment and housing assistance. Also, the probation officers were able to: (1) conduct more preemployment visits to prison road camps, (2) establish a unit for recruiting and counseling foster parents, and (3) start a program to enlist and train volunteer aides.

The San Francisco office of the Parole and Community Services Division of the State Department of Corrections augmented a regular staff of 45 parole agents and 4 parole aides with 2 EEA parole agents and 15 EEA parole aides. EEA participants were to provide more intensive supporting services to parolees and to establish new services for parolees.

The San Francisco District parole administrator said that using EEA participants increased service benefits. One EEA female parole agent was added to help the 1 regular female parole agent thereby reducing the caseload per agent from 80 to 40. Before EEA, the regular agent was just making rounds and providing little service. The additional agent enabled parolees to receive more intensive services, such as job locating and personal counseling.

In the administrator's opinion the San Quentin prison work furlough program, in which prisoners work outside the prison during the day then return to prison at night, would have been terminated if it had not been for EEA. He said that continuing the program was jeopardized because prisoner participants had committed a number of crimes. According to the administrator, these crimes were due in a large part to prisoners' dissatisfaction with the jobs in which they were placed. By assigning additional EEA aides and emphasizing quality job placement, the work furlough program was able to continue. The administrator said EEA benefited the public by helping parolees become productive citizens.

A Fitchburg, Massachusetts, police official said the addition of eight EEA patrolmen allowed the police department

to convert one route, previously covered by only a cruiser, back to a more effective walking beat for at least one and sometimes two shifts a day. The route is along a busy main street in Fitchburg and is now normally covered by the cruiser during the daylight hours and by a walking patrolman in the evening and, on occasion, the early morning hours.

In addition, the police department has been able to start an additional shift of two men that covers the entire city. The men provided support help where needed and operated a cruiser in the city during the change of shifts.

In Augusta, Georgia, EEA funds were used to add 23 uniformed police officers to an existing force of 124. Among other stated benefits, the EEA positions enabled the police department to provide an additional 24-hour patrol in the city's high crime areas beginning in March 1972.

The school district of Yuba City, California, had five EEA instructional aides augmenting about 15 federally funded instructional aides from another program. A program representative estimated that teachers were 20 to 30 percent more efficient because of the instructional aides.

Leominister, Massachusetts, hired an additional social studies teacher with its EEA funds. This enrollee teaches four or five classes in social studies each day at a junior high school. This enabled the junior high school to reduce the student/teacher ratio in social studies from 33 to 1 to about 28 to 1.

In a California conservation district, 38 EEA participants instituted fire prevention measures earlier in the year than the district normally could have instituted them. The district generally employed high school and college students as seasonal firefighters between April and October. Duties, such as preparing firefighting equipment and materials, had not been performed until EEA participants were hired. Hiring EEA firefighters thereby increased the safety of residents and protected natural resources in an area highly susceptible to costly fires.

The Richmond County, Georgia, Recreation Department hired 8 maintenance employees under EEA to supplement 23 regul r maintenance positions. Weekly reports and job sheets

showed that EEA employees were assigned along with regular employees for such various tasks as painting buildings, erecting signs, and maintaining equipment.

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health hired an EEA participant as an assistant supervisor of blood donations. This enrollee works full time finding women unable to bear children who have a particular blood type needed to make a serum to cope with a disease caused by blood incompatibility in newborn babies. According to a department official, about 20 to 30 donors were recruited yearly. The EEA participant recruited about 20 donors in the 6 months she had been working. The official estimated that, when the EEA enrollee was fully trained, the program would recruit three times as many donors as before. The enrollee also compiles and develops facts and statistics on this program for other States and counties.

The Sutter County, California, Sheriff's Department employed four EEA participants to replace four deputy sheriffs' positions of jailer, dispatcher, bailiff, and civil processor. The county could more effectively use the deputy sheriffs for law enforcement. Patrol beats were rezoned from three large areas to six smaller areas which provided better area coverage and, in effect, increased public safety.

Boston used EEA funds to hire a laboratory technician to work in its lead detection program. According to a program official, the EEA enrollee tests blood samples that are sent to the lead program laboratory to determine if the blood contains lead. The officials estimated that the EEA enrollee made about 80 percent of the tests.

SERVICES CONTINUED BECAUSE OF EEA FUNDING

Parks and recreation officials in Boston said that EEA enabled the city to keep three swimming pools at neighborhood schools open during the summer and also afterschool hours. They said that the pools previously had been open during the summer but would have had to close because of budgetary reductions. The instructors made the pools available to local residents and taught swimming, scuba diving, lifesaving, and first aid. Available records showed about 800 persons a day used the 3 pools.

These officials also said the EEA enrollees enabled the city to staff the gymnasiums in each of the schools during the evening and on weekends and during the summer. Although records were not available, officials estimated about 300 persons a day used the 3 gymnasiums.

Starting July 1, 1971, the San Jose city library closed all nine branch libraries on Mondays due to budget cutbacks. According to library officials, Monday is the second busiest day in the library system. Also when two new branch libraries opened in the fall of 1971, all branch libraries were scheduled to be closed an additional 3 hours a week. The main library was to be closed an additional hour each day.

San Jose, anticipating the help of EEA participants, on September 13, 1971, reopened the branch libraries on Mondays and terminated other scheduled cutbacks. Thirty-five EEA enrollees, serving in five library job classifications, were employed throughout the library system.

The San Jose Public Works Department lost 33 positions in the city's fiscal year which started July 1, 1971. For example, street-cleaning positions were to be cut from 11 to 9. The Department, by using 28 EEA enrollees, maintained and, in some cases, expanded the level of service. Although EEA enrollees were not placed into each position cut from the budget, they performed work which continued the services that were to be reduced.

The Modesto City school system employed 31 EEA maintenance personnel. Of tnese, 12 were employed as grounds keepers to landscape a new high school and to aid existing grounds maintenance crews. The other 19 EEA enrollees were

hired as custodians to update a school maintenance program which had lagged because 4 full-time custodians had been cut from the budget.

In Boston, the deputy program coordinator of the Concentrated Code Enforcement Program said the city eliminated 15 positions because of a cutback in Federal funding. He said the EEA enrollees enabled the city to continue two concentrated code enforcement projects and would enable them to complete a third project on time. Available records showed that the number of housing inspections increased from 99 in December 1971 to 276 in June 1972. A city official said the increase was due primarily to the addition of the EEA housing inspectors.

According to the local director of the Leominister Headstart Program, the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) required that a career development program be established for the Headstart staff but neither OEO nor the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare had provided funds for such a program. A position as career and training coordinator was established with EEA funds, and the participant will be responsible for establishing a career development program.

OTHER COMMUNITIES BENEFITED FROM EEA

In a related review involving six other program agents operating public employment programs in rural and urban areas, we found that, in the urban areas, the program generally served to prevent a decrease in city services rather than to provide additional services and that, in the rural areas, th[illegible]ram generally served to provide additional needed pu[illegible]c services.

In addition to the benefits we noted, other EEA program agents have cited the impact of public services under the act. A recent statement on manpower programs submitted to the Congress on behalf of the U.S. Conference of Mayors contained the following examples of benefits derived from EEA jobs.

1. Canton, Ohio--EEA jobs enabled the city to maintain the existence of the municipal transit system which otherwise would have closed.

2. Shreveport, Louisiana--additional fire department personnel hired under EEA resulted in improved insurance rating for the city with the result that the average homeowner saves up to $20 a year on fire insurance premiums.

3. Denver, Colorado--medical personnel hired under EEA enable the response time for emergency medical services to be cut in half.

4. Rochester, New York--EEA enabled the city to operate six recreation centers and to increase the maintenance and repair of municipal property by 40 percent.

5. Jersey City, New Jersey; Duluth, Minnesota; Honolulu, Hawaii; Long Beach and Hayward, California--drug abuse and rehabilitation clinics were initiated under EEA.

CHAPTER 3

SCOPE OF REVIEW

Our review included (1) an examination of the legislative history relating to the act, (2) an examination of agents' records and (3) discussions with agent officials on the service benefits resulting from the employment of EEA participants. Because the majority of agents reviewed did not compile or maintain records that measured changes in service benefits, we relied, for the most part, on discussions and on officials' subjective estimates in reviewing the effect of EEA on public service needs.

To provide diverse coverage in our review, we contacted nine program agents and their subagents and hiring agents representing three States, three counties and three cities with additional work being done at various levels of State and local governments. The selected agents represented (1) rural as well as urban areas and (2) areas with 4- to 15-percent rates of unemployment. Of the $973 million allocated by the Secretary during the first program year to fund about 200,000 jobs under the act, about $65.6 million was allocated to the 9 program agents to fund about 11,600 jobs. (See app. II for listing of program agents, funds awarded, and jobs authorized.)

APPENDIX I

GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE

REPORTS TO THE CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON

EMPLOYMENT, MANPOWER, AND POVERTY, SENATE

COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND PUBLIC WELFARE

ON PROGRAMS UNDER THE EMERGENCY EMPLOYMENT ACT OF 1971

"Review of the Allocation of Funds for the Public Employment Program under the Emergency Employment Act of 1971" (B-163922, December 17, 1971).

"Delay in Hiring of Persons under the Public Employment Program" (B-163922, February 16, 1972).

"Report on the Preparation and Approval of Plans to Implement the Public Employment Program" (B-163922, March 17, 1972).

"Selection and Enrollment of Participants in Programs under the Emergency Employment Act of 1971" (B-163922, October 12, 1972).

"Types of Jobs Offered to Unemployed Persons under the Emergency Employment Act of 1971" (B-163922, November 27, 1972).

"Impact of Grants to Indian Tribes under the Emergency Employment Act of 1971" (B-163922, March 14, 1973).

APPENDIX II

1972 PROGRAM YEAR

FUNDS AWARDED AND JOBS AUTHORIZED

FOR SELECTED PROGRAM AGENTS

UNDER THE EMERGENCY EMPLOYMENT ACT OF 1971

AS OF SEPTEMBER 1972

	Funds awarded	Jobs authorized
	(thousands)	
States (note a):		
California	$23,233.7	3,285
Georgia	5,097.7	1,518
Massachusetts	22,927.7	4,324
Counties:		
Greenville County, South Carolina	282.9	50
Richmond County, Georgia	552.3	114
Stanislaus County, California	5,189.6	861
Cities:		
Atlanta, Georgia	1,125.2	[b]164
Boston, Massachusetts	4,079.2	874
San Jose, California	3,117.9	399
Total	$65,606.2	11,589

[a]Funds awarded to States include amounts for State jobs and for jobs in jurisdictions in the State that did not qualify for direct grants.

[b]Does not include 289 summer positions.

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